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THE

GREAT GEYSERS

OF CALIFORNIA,

AND

HOW TO REACH THEM.

ILLUSTRATED.

BY LAURA DE FORCE GORDON.



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PREFATORY.

THE following information concerning the wonderful Geysers was gained by personal observation during my visit there in the early summer as traveling correspondent for the San Francisco "Daily Evening Post," and which was contained in my letters to that journal. It was suggested to me that I should incorporate the substance of the correspondence in a hand-book for the convenience of tourists. Acting upon the suggestion, I have done so; and added the several beautiful engravings, which I trust will be appreciated and accepted as compensation for whatever it may be deemed to lack in any other respect. The illustrations were engraved expressly for this work, as was also the finely executed map, for which I am indebted to the courteous officers of the Central Pacific Railroad Company.

LAURA DE FORCE GORDON.

OAKLAND, California.

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Map of the Railroad Routes to the Geysers.

THE GREAT GEYSERS,

AND

How to Reach Them.

Among the marvelous natural phenomena which abound in California, there is perhaps not one, save the unapproachable Yo Semite, which can compare with the wonderful collection of boiling springs and steam-jets known as "The Geysers." A visit to this most interesting natural wonder is comparatively inexpensive, after reaching San Francisco, and so easy of access that the tourist, however limited for time, should not fail to behold this startling spectacle.

Starting from the royal city by the Golden Gate, we take passage on the commodious steamer of the California Pacific Line at the Washington Street wharf, and sail up the beautiful San Francisco Bay, leaving the shipping of the world's commerce in the grand safe harbor behind us.

Goat Island lies to the east, while Oakland and Berkeley* appear most conspicuous on the shore beyond. To the west, diminutive Alcatraz, bristling

* Location of the State University.

with armament, stands sentinel of the Golden Gate ; and just above, Angel Island shuts out a view of Saucelito on the western shore. Further north and west, Mt. Tamalpais rises in somber majesty 2,600 feet above Point San Quentin,* and the beautiful village of San Rafael at its base.

Here we pass Red Rock, the Two Brothers, the Sisters, all barren, rocky islands, which furnish homes for countless sea-birds, and are utilized by a United States lighthouse. The shores alternate in hills and cultivated farms, whose comfortable homes lend life and variety to the landscape, while we speed along, into, and through San Pablo Bay and

LAND AT VALLEJO.

Here we transfer to the luxurious coaches of the California Pacific Railroad, and catch a glimpse of Mare Island Navy Yard, opposite Vallejo, which, with the town, are quickly left in the background as we speed toward Napa, sixteen miles up the valley. As we near the town, the Napa Asylum for the Insane is seen to the eastward, standing out in bold relief against the purple hills sloping down from the grand old mountains, and bristling with its seven towers, looking dark and gloomy enough ; rendered more cheerless, perhaps, because of the glaring contrast of its grim walls of brick and stone, to the bright little cottages in their showy dress of pure white, which stand in such close proximity.

The beautiful hills, which roll back from the valley on either side, sweeping, on the east, toward the lofty summit of St. Helena, seem to possess the power to produce or reflect light and shade, with a greater variety of charming effects than any sim-

* Location of the State Prison.

ilar scenery we have yet viewed. Here, we see knolls and ridges, sere and gray, lapped by folds of the mountain, where the rich, dark green of the feathery pine is lost in the gloomy hue of the dense chaparral, while deep depressions in the mountain side reflect alternate shades of rich purple, of blue, and brown, forming a picture of natural loveliness seldom seen. From such a background does the Napa Cemetery, visible to the eastward, look out upon the valley, its numerous marble tombs and monuments rising like white-robed ghosts from the somber cypress and fir which shade the last resting-place of the dead. The

CITY OF NAPA

Is built to the westward, and out of a forest of trees we only catch a glimpse of some fine dwellings and elegant public buildings, as we speed along the outskirts of the town to the east, passing several capacious hotels near the depot, one, the "Palace," a model of architectural beauty, and an ornament to the place. A few miles from town are the famous

NAPA SODA SPRINGS,

To which the healthful pleasure-seeker goes for complete enjoyment, and the invalid as to a veritable Pool of Bethesda, to be healed. The white stone building, standing in proud prominence 1,000 feet above the level of the valley, is plainly visible to the right as we speed along across Napa River, and leave the pretty, tree-embowered town in the distance.

But we must take a nearer view than a car window affords of that beautiful spot to appreciate its powerful attractiveness. The carriage-drive from Napa to the springs is very pleasant, and in the ascent of the mountains, just before reaching the

grounds, a grand view is obtained. The magnificent valley sweeps down to the blue waters of the bay, threaded by that sinuous stream, Napa River, and away and beyond is to be seen the faint outline of San Francisco and the shipping in the harbor, forty miles distant.

The quality and superiority of "Napa Soda Water" are too well known to require further notice here. The springs number twenty-seven in all, only six of them being used, and but one for commercial purposes. The splendid bottling establishment is over this one, and four hundred dozen bottles per day are put up and shipped to the markets of the world.

PAGODA SPRING.

A beautiful Pagoda is built over one of the springs, the solid stone pillars and floor forming a most appropriate setting for the natural stone basin from which flows this rare beverage.

Sitting in one of the huge rustic rockers shaded by the roof of the Pagoda, none but a stoic could gaze upon the natural loveliness surrounding, without growing enthusiastic. Within easy reach are growing orange trees, loaded with golden fruit, through the rich, dark foliage of which, a glimpse of the brilliant blossoms of oleander can be seen, while the scent of roses and jasmine freights the air with sweets. Above all this loveliness, the gracefully swaying pines sing a sweetly sad refrain to the accompanying trill of birds, who, undisturbed, congregate here in great numbers.

The hotel is not yet finished, and the accommodations are only for transient visitors, but the comfort of permanent guests will be fully consulted in carrying out the projected improvements. The elegant new stable just finished is an object of ad-



Pagoda Spring, Napa Soda Springs, Napa, California.

miring interest. Circular in form, it towers up to a height of seventy-five feet, surmounted by a glass cupola, which reflects for many miles alike the rising and the setting sun. The stable measures one hundred and twenty feet in circumference, and has, beside room for carriages, stages, harnesses, saddles, grain, and other feed, ample capacity for the care of two hundred and fifty horses. Composed of stone, beautifully white in color, it is a most attractive work of mechanic art.

“OAK KNOLL.”

Resuming our journey by rail from Napa, we notice soon after leaving the town, off to our left, the handsome residence and beautiful grounds with magnificent patriarchal oak trees resembling an English park, which constitute the elegant country home of R. B. Woodward, Esq.

This is the renowned wine-producing valley of our Golden State, and we flit through vast fields of vineyard, varied by fine orchards, and passing in quick succession through the several little stations along the line, the principal object everywhere being the spacious wine cellars, until we reach the handsome rural village of St. Helena, eighteen miles from Napa. This is quite a thriving town, but the great attraction is the famous

“WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS,”

Situated about two and a half miles from the village, in one of the loveliest mountain ravines to be found anywhere. These springs offer to the tourist in search of health, or pleasure, about as many attractions as any other watering-place on the coast, and are perhaps the most resorted to by the ultra-fashionable. The accommodations are ample and first-class, and only want of time prevents our giv-

ing a description of this favorite, and really meritorious, fashionable summer resort.

Beyond St. Helena, the valley narrows down to a mere verdant ribbon, stretched along, dividing the grim old mountain chains, which press upon it at either side. The finest vineyards and wine-cellars are passed, and, sweeping along through rich pasture land and lovely gardens, we soon reach

CALISTOGA,

The terminus of the California Pacific Railroad. The hot sulphur springs located here are the chief attraction of the place, but it is an important point for tourists, as daily stage lines diverge to all parts of the country north, east, and west. The most important being: To Lakeport, forty-eight miles; to the great Geysers, twenty-six miles; Harbin Springs, twenty-one miles; Lower Lake, thirty-five miles; and Santa Rosa, eighteen miles. These comprise the principal objective points of travel, but the Petrified Forest, Mark West Springs, and other interesting places, are situated along the routes.

The wonderful

PETRIFIED FOREST

Is only six miles distant, and we take passage in one of Clark Foss's open stages, and in fifty minutes alight at the "Hermitage" and take our way to this prostrate forest of stone. The trees extend over an area of twenty acres, where about 100 of the petrified logs can be easily traced, though there are 300 or more in the whole collection that have been outlined on the surface. The trees are all lying in one direction on the hillside, having fallen from north to south at an angle of forty-five degrees, the roots all being up the mountain and sloping downward.



"Pride of the Forest," Petrified Forest, California,
68 ft. long, 11 ft. diameter.

"PRIDE OF THE FOREST."

Only the tops of the trees are visible, except one log sixty-eight feet long, measuring eleven feet in diameter at the base, from which the earth has been entirely removed, and here it lies, a solid tree of stone, bark and all perfect. This tree records 1,100 years' growth, by layers, the grain of the wood being clearly perceptible. Along the side of the hill are thirty-six of these petrified logs in a distance of two or three hundred feet, all clearly outlined and partly uncovered. The ground is covered with chips and fragments of petrified wood and bark; but strangest of all is the frequent appearance of petrified charcoal, of which there can be no mistake, for, in some instances, the charred wood is not entirely petrified, and can be readily broken and picked in pieces with the thumb and fingers. This would indicate that the trees were acted upon by heat before the process of petrifaction began, for, in some cases, we find a log partly burned to coal and partly remaining perfect as wood, but all alike petrified.

From this altitude, though not high, we get a fine view. Through the clear, transparent atmosphere we see Mount St. Helena, Pine Mountain, above Clear Lake, Geyser Peak and the Hog's Back: Geyser Summit and the Coast Range in the distance to the westward present a grand spectacle, and for the moment we forget the silent wonders of nature's laboratory at our feet in contemplation of the grandeur and majesty of the world at a distance.

We now return to Calistoga, but have time to drive to Fossville, five miles on the road to the Geysers, and as not to stop at Fossville is a loss no

one would willingly submit to, we will stop there for the night.

There is so much to be admired and enjoyed here at this delightful place that many tourists may wish to remain a day or two, but we will proceed to the Geysers at once, and now for the magnificent ride of nearly twenty miles with the veteran stage-driver,

CLARK FOSS, AND HIS MAGNIFICENT SIX-IN-HAND.

Seated in the easy-riding, open stage, we speed along over a splendid road through Knight's Valley. Passing the hotel of that name, with its beautiful grounds and gardens, we soon begin to ascend the mountains. The grade up the mountain is pretty heavy and the ascent rapid, bringing the beautiful Sonoma and Russian River Valleys into full view, spread out like a magnificent piece of mosaic, at the base of this grand range of mountains.

LOVER'S LEAP.

The most interesting and romantic landmark along the route is an immense, isolated, cone-like peak, rising abruptly seven hundred feet above us to the left of the road, which is designated "Lover's Leap."

The road is tortuous in the extreme, some of the curves being so short that the leaders are out of sight on one side while the coach is rounding the other. It is here that the wonderful dexterity of the driver is best displayed. There is something quite remarkable about this man's management of horses; he seems to guide and direct them almost entirely by the voice. Holding the reins of his six horses with a firm grip, he gives an occasional twirl to the long lash of his whip, which echoes through the mountain defiles like a pistol. He calls to his



Foss at the Geysers, Sonoma County, California.

team and they obey him with wonderful alacrity. When a favorable stretch of road is reached the driver calls out, "Shake—shake one," and before the last word dies away the horses are flying along at a run: the next instant he says in a gentle tone, "Down," and the running gait is changed to a slow trot, when "Way down" is sounded, and the horses come to a dead stop as suddenly as if each one were paralyzed. The next instant, without a movement of the reins, brake, or whip, at the single word "shake," they fly off like the wind.

Away we go, up into the beautiful blue of this glorious mountain world, while the very atmosphere, rarefied and aromatic from the breath of fragrant pines, fir, and laurel, stimulates the senses like ancient wine, and not a single object of interest or feature of beauty in all this magnificent vision of embroidered earth and transparent sky, with their thousand charming "effects" of light and shade, escape observation, and each moment one wonders how the prospect can possibly be improved. We pass Pine Flat, an almost deserted village, which had birth during the great quicksilver mining excitement of two or three years ago, and which contained nearly two thousand inhabitants in a few month's time. The mines proved profitless in the main, and her disappointed population fled, leaving their dwellings and shops to the undisputed occupancy of rats and birds.

For two miles, we continue to ascend the mountains toward the famous "Hog's Back" road, which we do not travel, however; but the extent and magnificence of the lower world increases with every curve we round, until the summit is reached and we behold

A GLORIOUS VISION

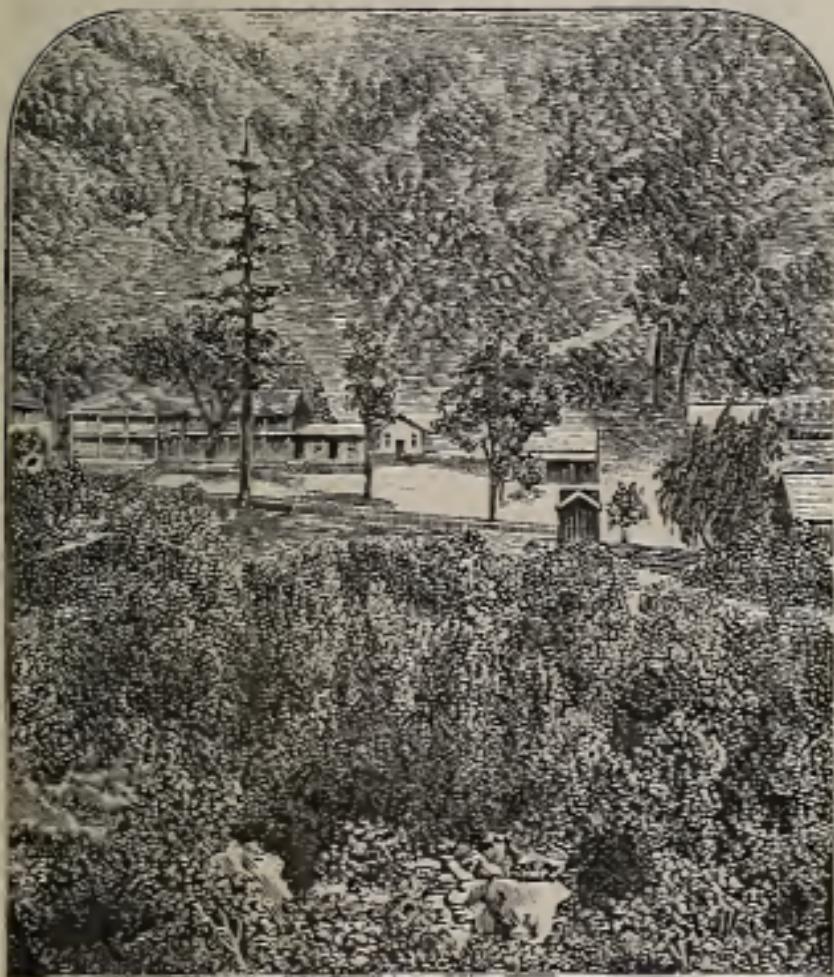
Of beautiful landscape, which no pen-painting, however gorgeous, could possibly depict. From this point most of Sonoma County is visible, beside part of Napa Valley, and the vast Pacific Ocean distinctly discernible, far beyond the Coast Range, to the westward.

From the summit we descend rapidly for several miles, the road rounding sharp curves as usual, the scenery always beautiful, but narrowed to a meager limit compared to the view on the other side. This is by far the pleasanter route to the far-famed Geyers, and those who have believed (as we confess to have done) that the road is rougher, the grade much steeper, or the route terribly precipitous over which Foss drives in a madly reckless manner, will find all these false impressions removed by a tour over the road.

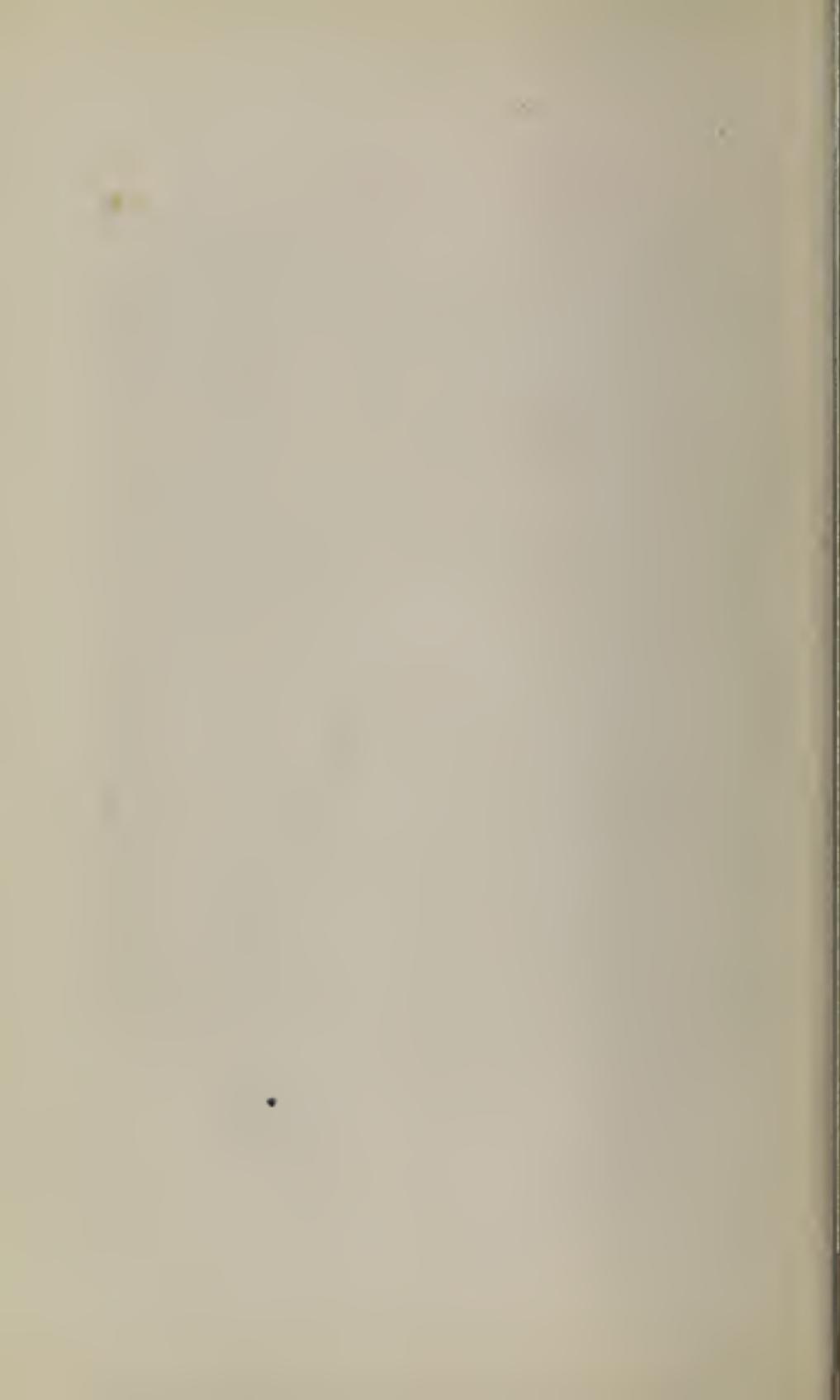
As we near our destination, a strong odor of sulphur is perceptible in the atmosphere, and as the stage sweeps up the broad approach to the

GEYSER HOTEL,

We get a brief glimpse of the steaming cañon in the distance. The hotel is a large, roomy, wooden structure, two stories high. The main building, fronting the Cloverdale road, is set in the side of a tree-covered mountain, which slopes off gracefully to the southward. A long wing, attached by a covered passage-way, stretches along the road a hundred feet, facing Geyser Cañon. A spacious verandah extends the entire length of the hotel, front and back, across the east end, and along both the ground and upper floors, which affords splendid views of the Alpine-like scenery on every side.



View of Geyser Hotel from summit of "Devil's Pulpit,"
Great Geysers of California.



There we find real home comforts, in the cheery atmosphere and hospitable reception which await the traveler within, and the royal mountain fare, consisting in part of brook trout, venison, fresh eggs, cream, and fresh ranch butter, seems "a feast for the gods," when one goes long without eating in this exhilarating, hungryfying atmosphere.

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE CANON.

From the pleasant and elevated lookout afforded by the upper verandah, we take our first view of that Plutonic region, Geyser Cañon, gazing long and wonderingly at the waves and shafts of vapor, which rise, white and light as gossamer, upon the cool, clear atmosphere.

The chasm itself, in whose mysterious depths lie hidden the sulphurous and inky springs from which rise the vast clouds of vapor, discloses on either side a charred and burnt surface, as if a huge lime-kiln had at some time found lodgment therein, leaving its smouldering fires to complete the terrible picture of perfect desolation. All this is seen above the beautiful green of luxuriant trees, whose thick foliage embowers Geyser Cañon, and intertwines with the graceful laurel, madroña, and ever-green oaks, which hedge in Pluton River. Nothing can be more startling in natural scenery than the contrast between the lovely ravine, two hundred feet away and below us, and the desolate, smoking chasm, rising like a consuming crater from out of this emerald setting.

But this is from a point of observation nearly half a mile away, and this abode of Pluto, Proserpine, and all the witches we must explore in detail to realize fully its likeness to the lower regions.

THE STEAM BATHS

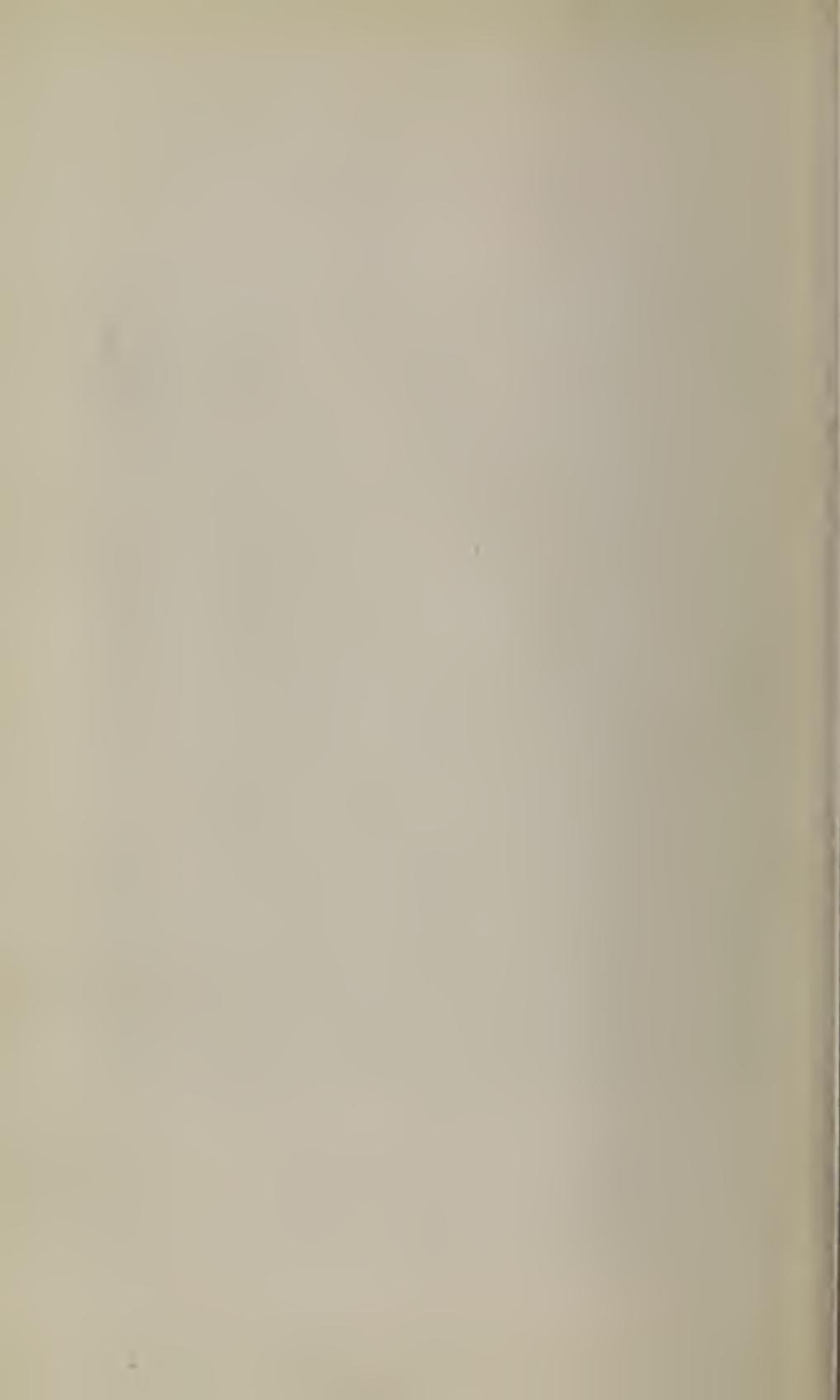
Which the guests at this hotel enjoy are a prominent feature in the tourist's experience here, and to take one as a recuperator after the journey thither is wonderfully refreshing and restful, and therefore desirable before making the tour of the cañon. Passing through the small gate across the road from the hotel, we traverse a narrow foot-path down the mountain side for several rods, crossing a little rivulet on a rustic bridge, the trees and flowering shrubs overhanging the walk, rendering it a most romantic little glade, whence we suddenly emerge at the edge of Pluton Creek, where from the opposite bank scores of steam jets are seen spurting out of the earth, which is not so barren but that bright-hued wild flowers, pretty grasses, and tufts of soft, green moss are growing in alarmingly close proximity to the hissing steam which pours out of the red and gray striped soil. We cross the creek over a long, low foot-bridge, rustic and primitive enough, and enter the steam-bath house, which is built directly

OVER A BOILING SPRING,

Near the cold water of the Pluton. The house is divided into three compartments: 1. A reception room, comfortably furnished. 2. A cell-like room, where a hot shower bath is obtained from water brought in wooden spouts from another hot spring a little further up the bank. 3. The steam room, under which the boiling spring is situated, and which, by a wooden tube contrived with an adjustable valve, can be converted into a fierce sweat-house in a very few minutes. A narrow hall extends along the two small rooms, from which a



Vulcan Steam Bath-house, Great Geysers of California.



doorway leads, by three or four steps, down to a deep pool of Pluton Creek, over which a tent is pitched, forming a splendid cold plunge to be taken after the steam bath, which is both exhilarating and a preventive of cold. These waters are highly medicinal, being strongly impregnated with various mineral properties, and those visiting the springs for health prize these baths as a cure for all physical ills, and they are wonderfully beneficial in many diseases. A small window is provided in the steam room for the bather to breathe cold air during the sweating process, if one prefers, and we found it very pleasant to do so, holding the thick curtain close to the side of the face and neck, while the hot steam caused a profuse perspiration to start from every pore. Shutting off the steam, the temperature is reduced sufficiently in a few minutes to make it safe to change to the warm shower bath, and thence to the cold plunge, where amidst the trout of Pluton Creek one can swim, if he knows how. Then, after a brisk rubbing with bathing towels we resume our attire, while a sensation of strength, vigor, and buoyancy pervades every fiber of the physical system, and we are ready for the

ASCENT INTO TARTARUS.

We pass to the beautiful little flower garden in front of the hotel, cross the road, and enter the gate "To the Geysers," and following a narrow trail, winding along the flower-fringed bank, soon reach a small spring of clear, cold water, which is strongly impregnated with various minerals, iron predominating. This is called the "Iron Spring," and the waters are said to possess great curative properties.

CROSSING PLUTON RIVER,

On a rustic foot-bridge, we ascend a spur of the mountains for a few yards; then a descent of a few feet brings us to the

“EYEWATER SPRING,”

Which issues out of a rocky basin in the side of the bank, smoking hot, and said to possess wonderful curative powers in diseases of the eye, its efficacy having been fully tested. At this point we make another descent of a few feet and cross the Geyser Creek, the water of which is clear, quite cool, and soft as rain-water, despite the conglomeration of mineral water which flows into it from the cañon. The trail leads along the edge of the stream and the abrupt bank of rocks, which actually glitter in the clear morning light with crystallized alum, sulphate of copper, and other minerals that have formed on the surface. The path is fringed with the graceful foliage of overhanging trees, forming beautiful little shady nooks, one of which we enter, to find it arched over and half encircled by immense rocks which form the “Devil’s Office.” A few steps further we cross another foot-bridge and enter

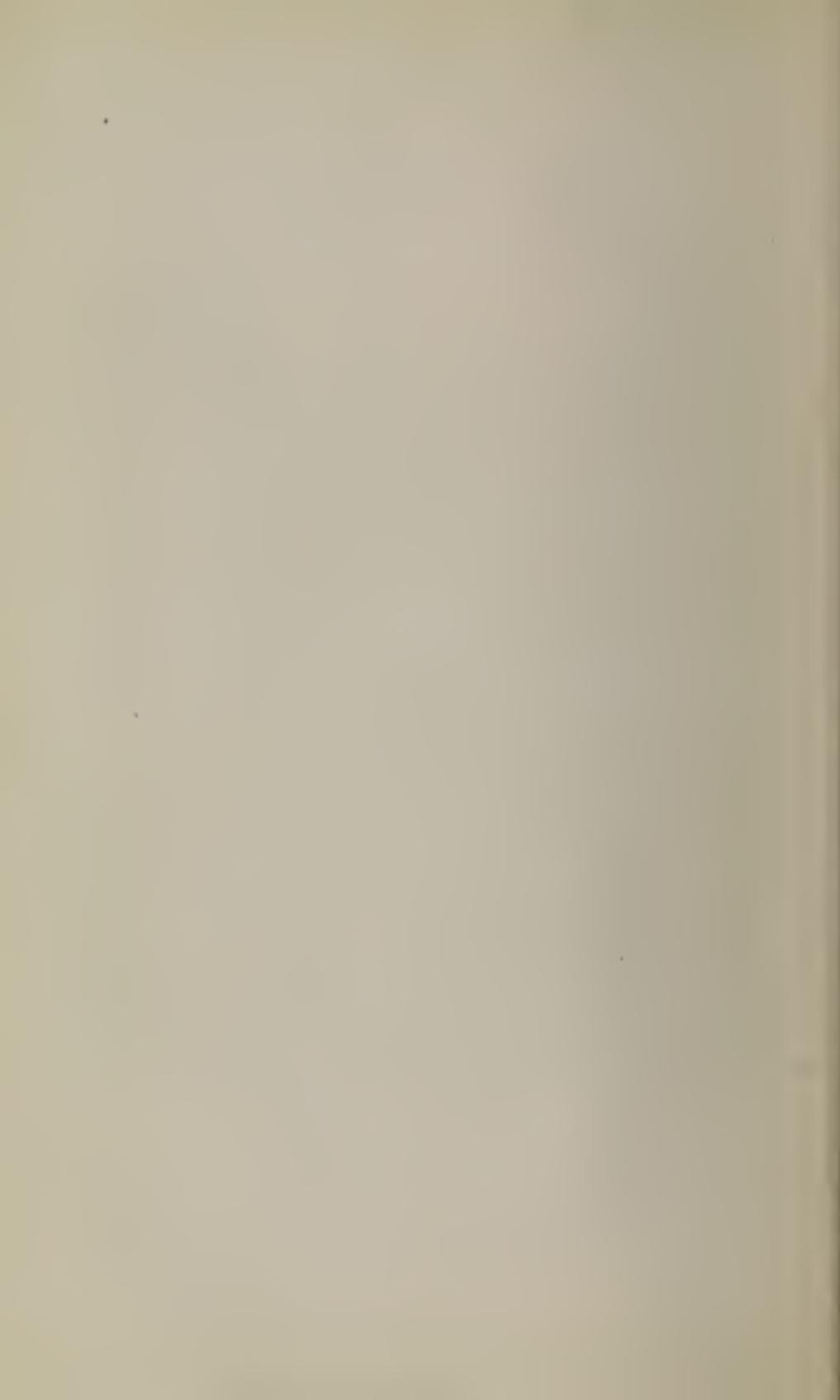
“PROSERPINE’S GROTTO,”

A rocky arch, over which the beautiful laurel boughs swing gracefully, and the clear waters of the Geysers ripple along the rocky cañon a few feet below, producing a pleasant effect, while the rocks above and around us shine and sparkle with their crystallized minerals that appear everywhere.

The path leads up a precipitous steep, the steps being cut in the earth, and we soon reach a large hollowed-out rock, which forms a comfortable seat and is known as the



Crossing Pluton River, Great Geysers of California.



“DEVIL’S ARMCHAIR.”

This stone seat almost blockades the path, which is narrowed down to a few inches in width between the rock and a fine tree growing out of the hand’s-breadth of earth bordering the cañon, from which an occasional puff of steam is visible.

A few feet further are huge rocks rising on our left, red as vermillion, into which we thrust our cane and find that it is a paint mine already mixed. To the right of this, down the cañon, is a beautiful “White Sulphur Spring,” the waters—clear and cool—flowing from a pure white basin formed by the minerals gradually deposited there. We travel on but a few yards, crossing and recrossing the ravine, however, when we enter the

“DEVIL’S KITCHEN,”

Where jets of steam puff out from numerous crevices in the rocks, while black-hued water, hot and smoking, bubbles up on every side. An arch in the high, rocky wall forms a sort of recess, from which a cloud of steam rolls out, occasionally enveloping everything near it.

The rocks rise abruptly thirty or forty feet high, and are seamed with white, red, green, and black stripes blending together at intervals, while a strange scent of sulphur fills the air, and there is a combination of bubbling, hissing, puffing, and grinding sounds, issuing from all sides, while the earth grows unpleasantly hot beneath our feet and we are glad to hurry along, but only to encounter more startling and terrifying sights and sounds, or rather they become intensified. But a few feet above we see the

“ DEVIL’S INKSTAND,”

A bubbling hot pool, dark as Erebus. About twenty feet further on is the “ Hot Alum Spring,” and just above it is

“ PLUTO’S PUNCHBOWL,”

Where thick, black water is tossing about, making a hollow, horrible sound, while puffs of steam issue from the deep-cleft rock. All along the rocks, far above these noisy, puffing, steaming jets, there are patches of crystallized sulphur, yellow as a canary bird’s plumage, while sulphate of iron and copper contrast with the prevailing hue.

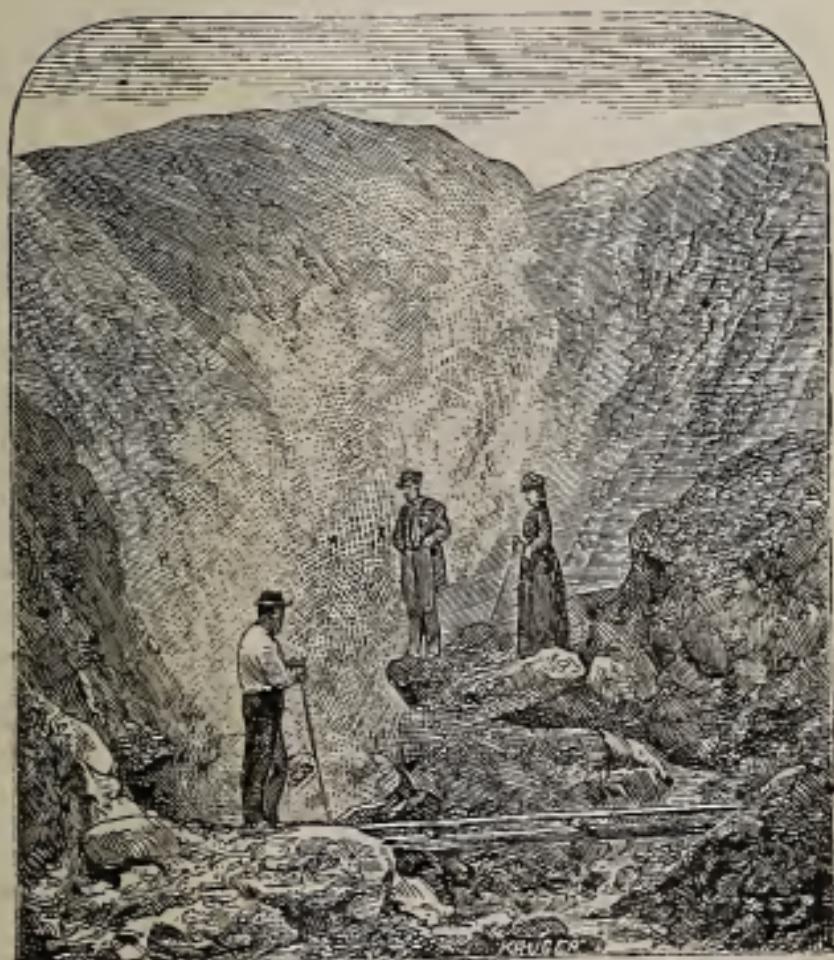
At a height of twenty or twenty-five feet, these rocks slope back against the mountains, forming a sort of shelf from which numerous jets of steam issue, around a large rocky fissure appropriately designated the

“ GEYSER SMOKESTACK.”

Walking cautiously along, a few steps bring us to a cold “ Alum Spring,” issuing from a deep fissure at the base of the overhanging rocks, the water being intensely strong, as one taste of it proved. To the left of the path, which leads directly to its lower edge, passing across the cañon again to the right of it, is

“ THE WITCHES’ CALDRON,”

A seething, bubbling pool of unknown depth, about ten feet across, the water being thick and black as ebony. The rocks almost surround this spring, rising abruptly from its murky waters on the west side, and on the upper and east the rocks are piled up in broken and detached masses. We are told that the lower edge of the caldron was formerly



"Witches' Caldron," Great Geysers of California.

bordered by a rim of rock and mineral deposit, but in 1860 it was destroyed by a terrific explosion, which was heard for a great distance, and which shook the ground at the hotel like an earthquake. Since then, no explosions have occurred in the cañon. The heat of this spring reaches 212 degrees Fahrenheit, while none of the others are over 180 or 190 degrees. The whole cañon is steaming hot here, and we are satisfied to leave the witches to "boil and bubble" and to proceed on our explorations. To the right, a few rods further, is the

"DEVIL'S CANOPY,"

A tower-like rock fifteen or twenty feet high, overhanging a deep indenture, which is bordered with stripes of dark bottle-green, shaded to pale green, followed by dark red stripes of cinnabar, while the great boulder, perched like a crown above it, is striped or mottled with shades of red, brown, gray, and white, curiously blended. A jet of steam issues from the foot of this rock with great force; at times the steam is so dense as to completely envelop that portion of the cañon. Directly in the path is a small crevice from which issues a jet of hot air and steam, which is not noticed except when the atmosphere is quite cold, but which is so quickly felt by the unlucky tourist who happens to step upon, or even very near to it, that the guide's tardy warning to "be careful," is entirely superfluous. At this point we turn and look down the cañon—the water falls fifteen or twenty feet over basaltic rocks, down into the "Witches' Cauldron," steam-jets spurt out, hissing and puffing on every side, the air is thick with vapors from every chemical combination possible to imagine, and with such surroundings it is easy to believe that his satanic majesty's domain has "slopped over" and lodged in Geyser Cañon,

or as an excited individual exclaimed at his first view of it: "Hell's broke loose." Proceeding a few steps further, we reach another huge steaming mass, rising many feet, to the right of the cañon, where the steam issues with a hoarse, unearthly sound from a great tubular fissure, which, for want of a name, we designate

"GEYSER SAFETY-VALVE."

This is arched by an overhanging rock far above, upon which the colors are brighter and more varied than elsewhere, and the mineral crystals are formed in little cells like honey-comb, presenting an attractive appearance. About eighteen or twenty feet above, a rocky promontory is thrust out, dividing the cañon, and from which issue clouds of steam in small puffs, great waves, or occasional jets, from base to summit, seventy-five feet or more above. This is called

"THE DEVIL'S PULPIT."

At the left of the cañon, facing "Pulpit Rock," rises a perpendicular ridge to about forty feet in height, and then slopes back to the mountain, which is called

"STEAMBOAT SPRING,"

Producing the peculiar sound as of steam escaping from a steamboat. This rock actually bristles with steam-jets, and looks weird enough from the "Pulpit" summit. Here we have a splendid view of the entire cañon, the Geyser Hotel beyond Pluton River Ravine, and the lofty, heavily timbered mountains beyond.

Magnificent trees of laurel, alder, and live-oaks grow on the upper edge of this ridge, extending some distance into the mountains, forming a fine

background for the "Devil's Pulpit." The path leads down into a sort of basin a few feet below the summit, where we pass steaming springs, strongly medicinal, and said to be very beneficial to those troubled with asthma and other lung diseases. Ascending the upper edge of this basin we descend again, passing a "low bridge" formed by a tree fallen across the trail, but still growing green and luxuriantly, and soon reach a pure crystal stream called "Temperance Spring." Down a heavily shaded path for a few yards, and we reach

"LOVER'S RETREAT,"

A lovely little emerald arbor, beautifully picturesque and romantic. A rustic seat extends along the trunk of a fine laurel tree, which grows horizontally out from the mother trunk about three feet from the ground. The body being hollow for some distance, the aperture is used as a "post-office," and is filled with cards, notes, etc., left by tourists. On one side, grand old rocks rise in stern grandeur high up the gently sloping mountains, while below this little nook, carpeted with wild blossoms, murmurs a gentle brook in its descent over its pebbly bed, while, above all, the interlacing branches of the laurel, madroña, oak, and alder form a grateful shade which is most refreshing, and a most delightful contrast to the fearful chasm through which we have so recently passed. Down the path to the stream, and we come to another white sulphur spring of cold water, passing which we ascend the ravine, wind along the side through a thicket of manzanita, oak, etc., and suddenly emerge into an open space capping a lofty promontory which rises 150 feet above the cañon, opposite to the "Witches' Cauldron." This is called the

“LOVERS’ LEAP,”

But wherefore we have not learned. No disappointed swain or Dulcinea has ever been known to leap over the cliff into the sulphurous depths below, but nature has provided a splendid place for a fatal plunge, and any one inclined to flee from present ills to those he knows not of, can experiment here on a grand scale.

A few rods to the southeast we again emerge from the thicket and begin to descend into a bow-like depression called the

“LAVA BEDS,”

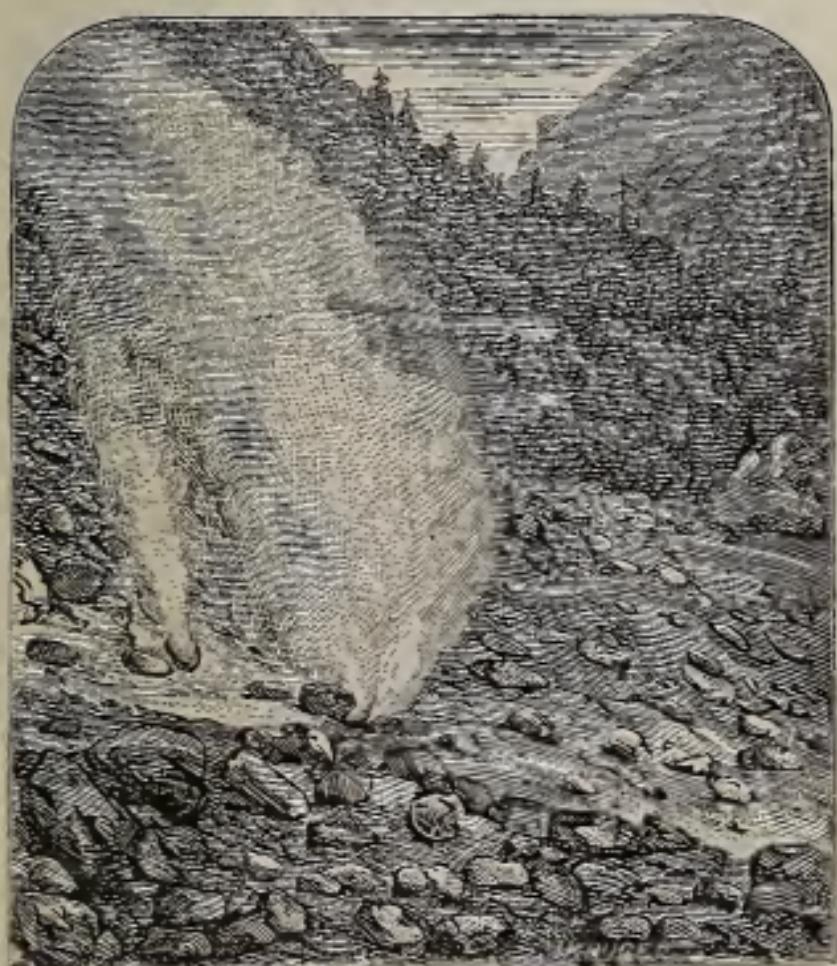
Where huge lumps of scoria lie scattered about. Steam spouts from numerous crevices along a slight mound which is apparently hollow, as a rock dropped heavily upon it jars the whole mass, producing a shock slightly like that from an electric battery. On the upper edge of this crater is a rim of rocks from which boiling springs spout forth; one, a noisy jet of steam, is called the

“INDIAN SWEAT BATH,”

From their having once built a “tepee” over the orifice, and used it to sweat their sick. From this point we continue down the “Lava Beds” for several rods, and reach the

“DEVIL’S TEA-KETTLE,”

Where the steam escapes with such force as to be heard a great distance. At one time a tube was inserted into the fissure, but the terrible whistle proved a great annoyance to people at the hotel, and it has been removed. Down the edge of the barren mountain we descend rapidly nearly a quar-



"Devil's Teakettle," Great Geysers of California.

ter of a mile, and reach the bank of Pluton Creek, where a beautiful leafy bower, called

“LOVER’S REST,”

Is reached, and we are glad to avail ourselves of the resting place on the rustic seats under the shady trees. A short walk brings us to the path leading back across the river to the hotel, which we reach in safety after a four hours’ tramp through the cañon and over the mountain, but not yet having seen all the wonders of this strange place.

There are other notable springs which belong to the collection of valuable mineral waters of this region, and which are to be included in the sights to be seen here, and are used for the benefit of the guests at the Geyser Hotel.

About half a mile from the hotel in a northeasterly direction, is situated a “Hot Acid Spring,” called

“LEMONADE SPRING,”

From the peculiarity of its acidity. This spring is reached by following the trail which leads to the Geysers for some distance, but diverges on reaching the cañon, which we cross and leave to the right and east.

These springs are not always visited by tourists, who come mainly to visit the wonderful Geysers, and the path is rather more difficult to travel perhaps, but it is a pleasant walk, the trail winding along the bank of Pluton River, at times on the perpendicular cliffs, and again plunging into a thicket of beautiful madroña, laurel, and manzanita.

Just before reaching the spring we notice an object of interest near the path, called the “Siamese Twins.” Two live-oaks, growing a few feet apart,

are joined together about five feet above the ground by a limb nearly five feet in length and two in circumference, which grows from the trunk of one tree into the other, firmly uniting them in perfect Siamese-Twin fashion.

The trail leads down and around a sort of curving hillside, and we find the acid spring situated in a beautiful little glen, from which the banks recede, forming a miniature valley, flanked by verdant waves of satin-leaved madroña, from whose shining boughs birds carol forth their joyous matins. This spring is said to be a veritable "bath of beauty," the waters being so strongly impregnated with mineral acids as to remove all tan, sunburn, and freckles from the complexion, rendering the cuticle soft and white, and is of course, as a special beautifier, in special favor with the ladies.

Not more than a quarter of a mile from this interesting spot, is the celebrated

"INDIAN SPRING,"

Situated in a deep, tree-bordered ravine. The water has a peculiarly acrid taste, and is of inky blackness. The Indians formerly made great use of this spring in treating diseases, and brought their sick here to be healed. Several years ago, that great tragedian, the late Edwin Forrest, visited this locality, and was perfectly cured of a severe attack of rheumatic gout, by bathing in the waters of this wonderful spring.

Very little is known of the chemical and curative properties of this vast collection of marvelous mineral waters by actual scientific analysis, but it seems that Nature has succeeded in bringing into as contracted a space as possible, all of the remedial agents of a chemical character that could, by any practical means, be applied for the "Healing of the Nations."

Apart from the magnificent scenery of this region, the startling exhibition of mysterious phenomena transpiring in Geyser Cañon, the exhilarating effect of the pure, rarefied atmosphere of these lofty and grand old mountains, the certainty of finding relief from physical diseases by a course of treatment afforded by these waters, makes this one of the most attractive and beneficial summer resorts on the continent.

The location of the Geysers is such, and the facilities for traveling to and from, so complete, that the tourist can visit more places of note and interest en route, both going and returning, than can be found in the same distance in any other part of the State. Small game is abundant on the mountains—and if an ambitious Nimrod thinks he has lost a grizzly bear, he could easily find him in the region of the Cobb Mountain, a few miles distant, and the Pluton swarms with trout.

THE CLOVERDALE ROUTE.

After having remained long enough to explore this interesting spot, and enjoyed the amusements and pastimes so generously offered, we will return to San Francisco. Now for a choice of routes; take the Calistoga and Napa Valley route, or return by Cloverdale, and through the magnificent Russian River Valley? The recently established stage line of Van Arnam & Kennedy, from the Geysers to Cloverdale, is one of the best in the State for speed and safety. The road runs along this grand mountain range, a distance of seventeen miles, winding along and above Pluton River to its junction with Russian River, near Cloverdale. The scenery is very beautiful, and if not of such grandeur and sublimity as that through which we have just passed, it is more picturesque. The course of

the river and of the mountains bordering thereon, is slightly north of west and south of east, leaving the southern side of the northern range of mountains exposed to the sun's rays, where its deeply scarred sides, seamed and corrugated, stare at us in barren, sterile ridges, occasionally relieved by a scant growth of trees, which manage to find sufficient moisture in the deep ravines to eke out a dwarfed existence.

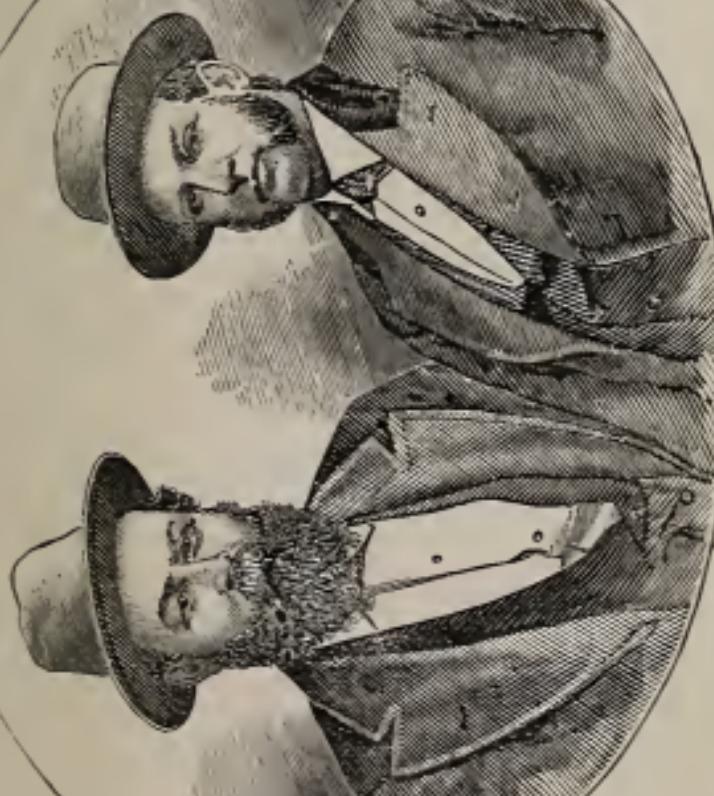
On the north side of the range, however, and along which the road runs, the contrast is very great. Here vegetation abounds in the utmost profusion; gigantic trees of pine and fir tower in majesty to the height of an hundred feet, while the madroña and laurel intertwine their graceful branches, forming cool, shady groves, where the shrubby manzanita and fragrant-blossomed buck-eye fill every interstice, and brilliant-hued wild flowers abound everywhere.

A short distance from the mouth of the cañon, appears

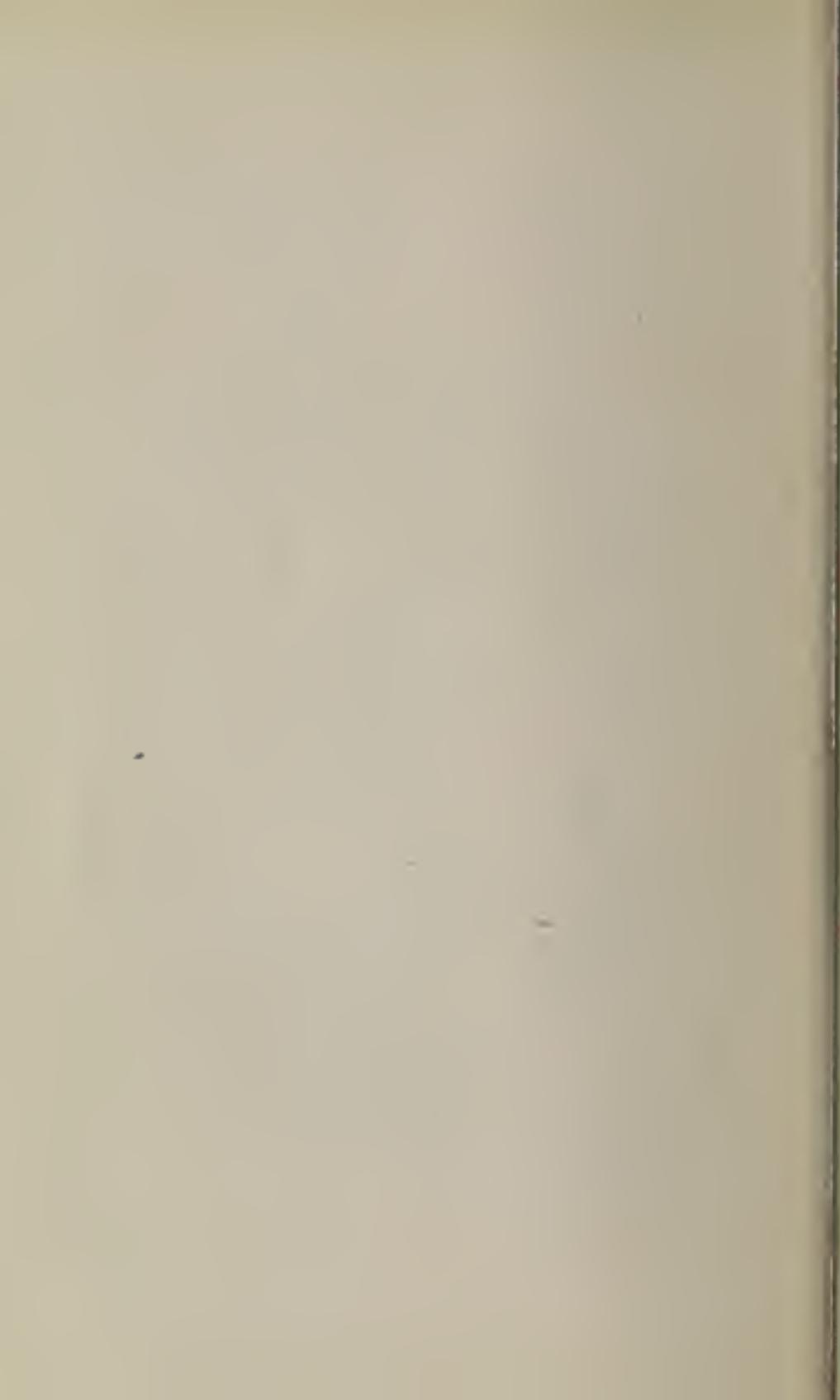
PROFILE ROCK,

A huge projection from the crest of the mountain towering above us, and which bears a striking resemblance to the human face in profile.

Beautiful, indeed, is this mountain scenery, but the timid or nervous traveler cannot gaze down the abrupt declivity to the left of the road, where the unmountain falls a sheer precipice several hundred feet below, without a shudder at thought of the possibility of an accident which would plunge one down into the yawning ravine below. But the stage whirls along and around these mountains with astonishing rapidity and ease, the fine horses always controlled by the most careful and steady-handed drivers, and we reach



Van Arnam & Kennedy, Proprietors Cloverdale and Goyser
Stage Line.



CLOVERDALE,

The terminus of the North Pacific Railroad, in safety. Here we take passage in the fine passenger cars, and are fast gliding along the broad and fertile valleys through which Russian River finds its way to the sea.

The principal objective points along the route are

“SKAGGS’ SPRINGS,”

Reached by stage, eight miles from the depot at Geyserville. These springs are famous for their healing properties, and the place is a popular and fashionable resort for summer guests. The scenery along the valley possesses great charms for the lover of nature. One cannot weary of gazing upon the beautiful vision of hills which sweep back from this lovely valley like billows of emerald, studded with its dark-hued gems of fir, pine, and oak trees. To the southward the hills recede, and cling close to the base of Geyser Peak, which towers in somber majesty more than 2,000 feet above the valley. Leaving Geyserville again by cars in a few minutes, we reach the famous

“LITTON SPRINGS,”

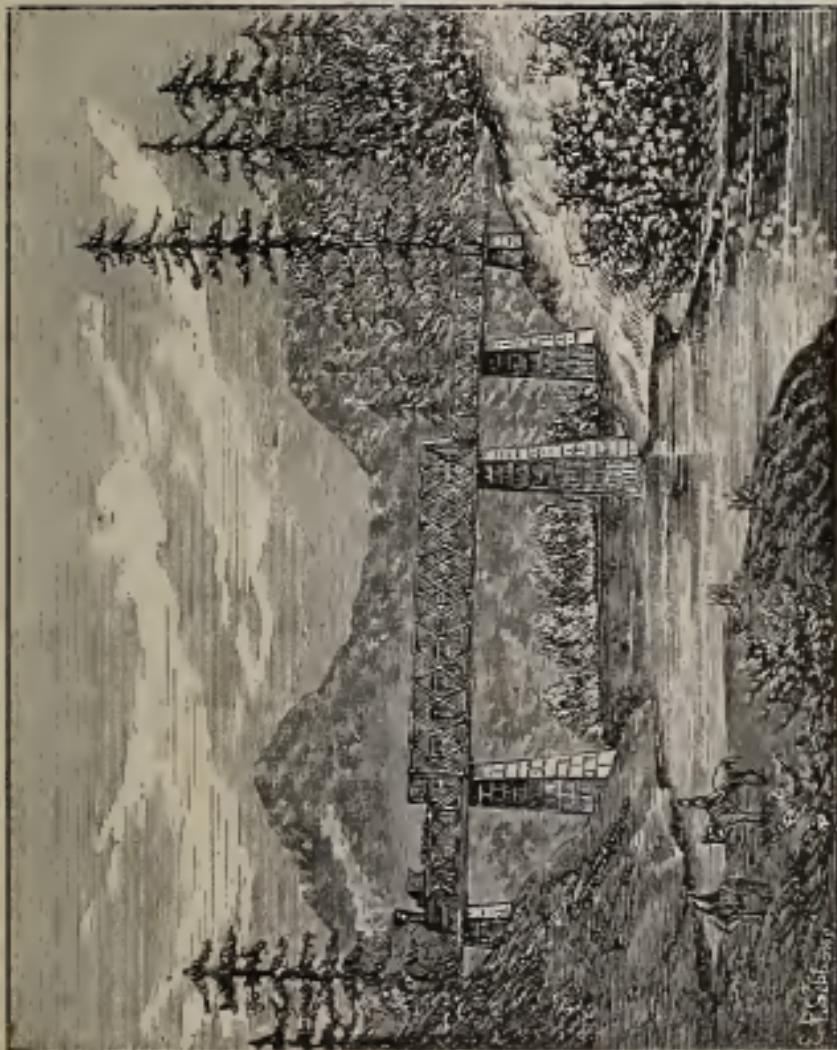
Six miles beyond. The hotel and numerous cottages are pleasantly situated on a gently sloping hill about half a mile from the depot, and offer the usual attractions to pleasure-seekers. These springs furnish the celebrated “Seltzer water,” which is bottled direct from the Springs, and has become so popular as a pleasant and healthful beverage. We pass rapidly along through Healdsburg, a flourishing town, not only attractive in itself, being beautifully situated upon Russian River, about midway of

the length of the valley, but also possessing many suburban "summer resorts," that offer the usual inducements to tourists to visit them. Passing several minor stations, ten miles bring us to Mark West, near which are the fine mineral springs of that name. Two miles beyond is Fulton, the junction of the branch railroad, which leads off to the magnificent Redwood lumber region, sixteen miles to the westward. Six miles further, and we reach

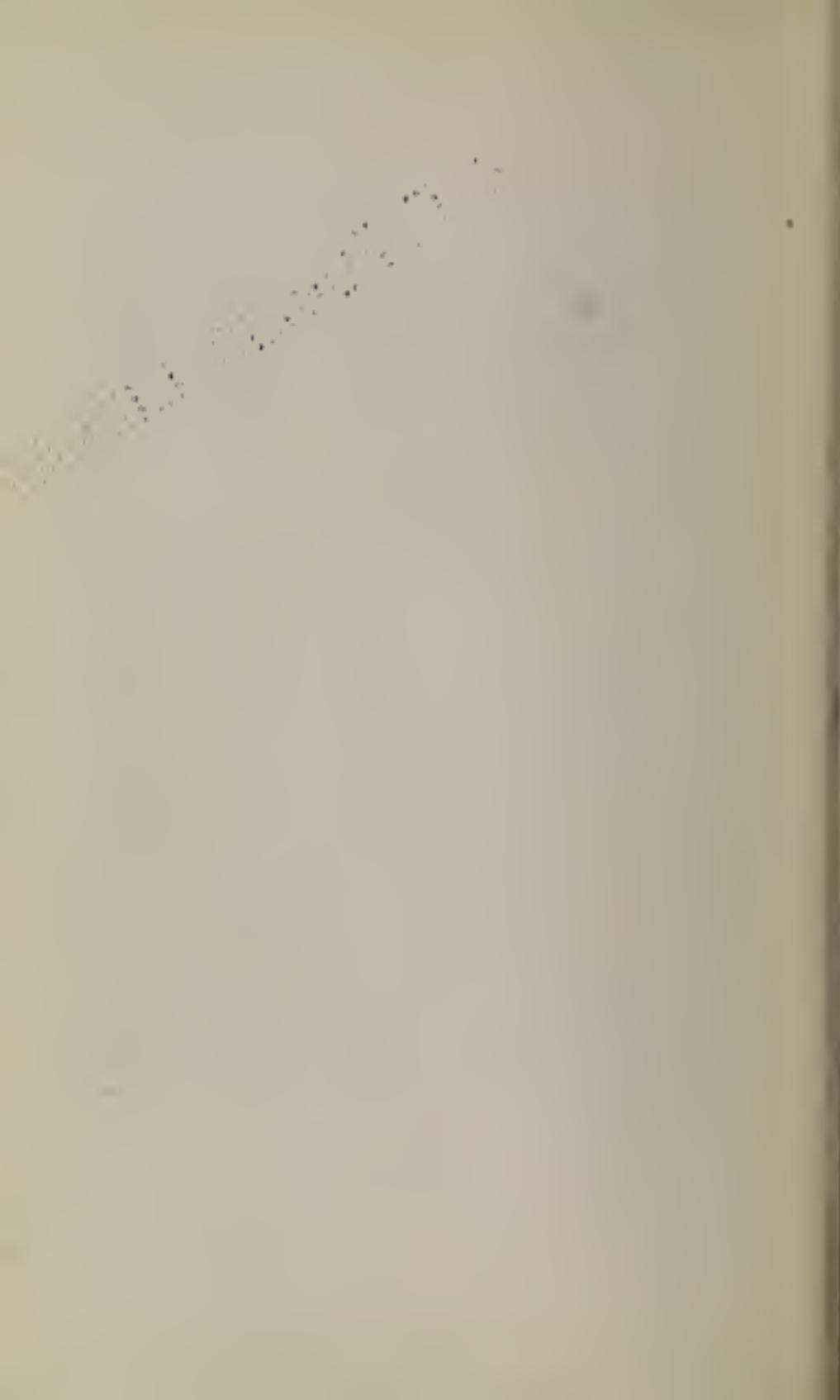
SANTA ROSA,

That lovely town, the county seat of Sonoma County. This is one of the most beautiful and healthy places in the State, and offers many inducements to the tourist to tarry awhile within her hospitable precincts. The famous "rose tree," which at one time contained 20,000 blossoms, is growing in one of the many beautiful gardens with which this place abounds, and though shorn of much of its beauty by having been pruned of most its branches, is still a gigantic rosebush. There are many splendid drives leading out of Santa Rosa in different directions; and, as no town of importance in California is without its mineral springs, so this "city of roses" boasts of sulphur springs, only a few miles distant toward the beautiful purple hills which guard this rose-crowned queen, and an excursion thereto is amongst the first attractions offered.

From Santa Rosa, our route lies through one of the most beautiful and productive portions of this lovely valley, and we pass in rapid succession through the several little stations for fifteen miles, when we pass through the outskirts of Petaluma, one of the principal towns of Sonoma County. A few miles more through this lovely land of native evergreen oaks, and we change from the cars to the splendid



North Pacific Railroad Bridge across "Mark West," Sonoma County, California.



steamer of the North Pacific line at Donahue, and are speeding down the Bay again, en route to San Francisco.



NOTE.

The entire distance from San Francisco to the Great Geysers, via Vallejo and Calistoga, is 85 miles: to Vallejo, by steam, 25 miles; thence to Calistoga, by rail, 38 miles; thence, by Foss' stage line, to the Geysers, 22 miles. Distance, via Donahue and Cloverdale, is 104 miles: to Donahue, by steamer, 34 miles; thence, by rail, to Cloverdale, 56 miles; thence, by Van Arnam & Kennedy's stage line, to Geysers, 14 miles. Tickets can be procured at the general ticket offices in San Francisco for round trip for \$12. To go by one route and return by the other, the ticket will cost about \$1 more.

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